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ABSTRACT

This lesson focuses on the American Revolution, which encouraged the founding fathers' desire to create a government that would, as stated in the Preamble to the Constitution, issue domestic tranquility and provide for the common defense. The lesson correlates to the National History Standards and the National Standards for Civics and Government and contains eight primary source documents and paintings. It presents historical background in an overview of the factors which contributed to the American Revolution and the progression of the war until its end with the Treaty of Paris in 1783. The lesson provides seven detailed teaching activities for the teacher to implement in the classroom. Attached are a sample written document analysis worksheet and a sample photograph analysis worksheet. (BT)

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ED 461 604

National Archives and Records Administration

THE CONSTITUTION COMMUNITY

Revolution and the New Nation (1754-1820s)

Images of the American Revolution

By David Traill

SO 033 572

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2001

The Constitution Community is a partnership between classroom teachers and education specialists from the National Archives and Records Administration. We are developing lessons and activities that address constitutional issues, correlate to national academic standards, and encourage the analysis of primary source documents. The lessons that have been developed are arranged according to historical era.

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Images of the American Revolution

Constitutional Connection

This lesson focuses on the American Revolution, which encouraged the founding fathers' desire to create a government that would, as stated in the Preamble, insure domestic tranquility and provide for the common defense.

This lesson correlates to the National History Standards.

Era 3 -Revolution and the New Nation (1754-1820s)

- **Standard 1C** -Demonstrate understanding of the factors affecting the course of the war and contributing to the American victory.

This lesson correlates to the National Standards for Civics and Government.

Standard IV.A.2. -Explain how nation-states interact with each other.

Cross-curricular Connections

Share this exercise with your history, government, and art colleagues.

List of Documents

1. Ethan Allen and Captain de la Place. May 1775. The capture of Fort Ticonderoga, New York. Copy of engraving after Alonzo Chappel .

2. Valley Forge--Washington & Lafayette. Winter 1777-78. Copy of engraving by H. B. Hall after Alonzo Chappel .

3. General George Washington and a Committee of Congress at Valley Forge. Winter 1777-78. Copy of engraving after W. H. Powell, published 1866 .

4. Benjamin Franklin at the Court of France .

5. The Surrender of General Burgoyne at Saratoga. October 1777. Copy of painting by John Trumbull, 1820-21 .

6. Benedict Arnold's Oath of Allegiance .

7. Surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, Virginia, October 19, 1781, by which over 7,000 British and Hessians became prisoners. Copy of lithograph by James Baillie, ca. 1845 .

8. Treaty of Paris (page 1 , signature page).

Historical Background

Many factors contributed to the eventual success of the American colonies as they revolted against British rule. American leadership, the timely support of international allies, and international respect and recognition played major roles in the struggle for independence. Several documents and engravings held by the National Archives help to illustrate these important factors that led to the founding of the United States.

Beginnings of the Conflict (1775-1777)

Before hostilities began, Americans tried to express their frustrations at being treated differently from other British citizens of the king's empire. They strongly objected to being taxed yet represented only through the concept of "virtual representation" in Parliament. Such pleas were ignored by the king and his Privy Council.

In April 1775, British forces under General Thomas Gage attempted to march from Boston to the nearby villages of Lexington and Concord, in order to seize supplies that the colonials had stored there for their local militiamen, known as Minutemen. Americans also attacked the British at their fort at Ticonderoga, in New York. This attack, led by Vermonter Ethan Allen, took the British by complete surprise. Ticonderoga was a major control point overlooking a strategic lake that could be used to transport goods; the fort also had many cannon, which were captured and later put to use against the British forces in other battles. The Battle of Bunker Hill encouraged American patriotism when, in June, American rebels seized a point of high ground in Boston and forced the British to attempt to dislodge them. The British took enormous casualties, but eventually took the hill when the Americans ran out of ammunition and powder. This was another example of America's abilities to fight, and it was noted by people in America, Britain, and elsewhere.

Violent action having begun, the Second Continental Congress debated what steps to take against Britain. In the end, the delegates at Philadelphia drafted the Declaration of Independence in mid-1776, stating their objections to British rule and reasons why they should now become independent. The king's reaction was not one of support, and instead

he sent thousands of British regulars and Hessian soldiers hired from Germany across the Atlantic.

The American militiamen were not well organized. They did have a new commander-in-chief, General George Washington. They did not have a standing army. There was no navy. Volunteers for the fighting were overconfident, and many lacked any military training. Despite these factors, some American fighters did have experience fighting in previous conflicts.

Washington battled both the British army and shortages facing his men. Supplies for the Continental army were often insufficient. While the colonies were in revolt, their government was based on the proposed Articles of Confederation, although the government established by the Articles was limited in power. For example, the Congress lacked a power to raise money through taxes. The new government had to attract respect, aid, and recognition from other nations. One of the first to do so was Spain, who had colonies to the south of the English colonies. One of the best successes came from the diplomatic efforts of Benjamin Franklin, who was sent to Paris to negotiate with Britain's traditional enemy.

At first, France could not openly aid the American cause. Franklin was well known in France, and did his best to appear as American as the people in France had expected. It helped that the Articles of Confederation established by the Second Continental Congress showed that the Americans had plans for their future.

International support played a major role in the success of the colonies' revolution. The efforts of Franklin and others in negotiating with the French for supplies and aid were vital. In fact, some European soldiers came to America, inspired by the revolution that was occurring. Notable among these arrivals were Baron Von Steuben from Prussia and the young French Marquis de Lafayette. Both played significant parts in improving the American military's abilities.

Another problem that confronted Americans during the American Revolution was that of Loyalists, those who chose to remain loyal to the mother country, and those who occasionally were British supporters. In 1780, the Americans suffered a major blow to their hopes when one of their heroes, General Benedict Arnold, joined the British army.

Because of American victories in the West and in the Northeast, the efforts of the British to retake their colonies did not go as planned. Prior to Arnold's defection, he led an invasion of Canada. A subsequent British invasion of the colonies was turned back, but Americans were disappointed. They had hoped that the former French citizens would rally to the American cause, but the Canadians did not do so.

In 1777, the British government planned a strong invasion of the American colonies from Canada. General Howe instead went southward from New York, seized Philadelphia, and settled in for the winter. Meanwhile, under General "Gentleman Johnny" Burgoyne, the British insertion into Northern New York was hampered by many problems, natural and

manmade. American General Gates's troops finally stopped Burgoyne at Saratoga, in New York, after Howe had stopped his participation in the invasion plan. The surrender of Burgoyne's command on October 17, 1777, proved to be a major turning point in the Revolutionary War. Following the battle at Saratoga, France believed that America could defeat the British. France began to send ships loaded with guns, ammunition, cloth, gunpowder, and other needed goods.

The overwhelming superiority of the British army forced the American forces out of the major cities during the brutal winters of the war. During the winter of 1777-78, the Americans camped at Valley Forge, in Pennsylvania. While the British troops under General Howe were comfortably occupying Philadelphia and enjoying themselves, the American soldiers nearby suffered greatly. Revolutionary War soldiers were often farmers who had families at home. General Washington complained that his troops were underfed and underpaid, and that many would leave during the harvest season to bring in their crops or during the winter for safer, warmer quarters with their families. Many other problems can be seen in documents 2 and 3 .

The War Turns (1778-1781)

As the war progressed, Americans faced serious economic problems. In an effort to raise the money needed to finance the war, the Continental Congress authorized the sale of war bonds. Even that was not enough. The Continental Congress began to print larger and larger amounts of new Continental dollars, which quickly became almost worthless. Loans from foreign nations were used to buy needed supplies, but it was apparent from the noticeable inflation that the new nation was spending its way to an early problem if the situation was not quickly resolved.

A 1779 British invasion through Georgia towards the Carolinas eventually proved to be a major quagmire for the British commanders. British troops were unprepared for new tactics used by American rebels, who fought small, delaying skirmishes, retreated, and then would turn to fight again. British General Cornwallis fought his way along the eastern edge of America, but was unable to achieve a knock-out blow.

Regrouping in the Chesapeake region, Cornwallis planned to await fresh supplies and troops sent across the ocean from England. Without his knowledge, however, Washington had left the safety of New York and marched his forces south where a trap was laid for the British general. While in the French West Indies, French Admiral de Grasse had notified Washington of his fleet's availability, which Washington accepted, and so the French sailed for Yorktown, on the Chesapeake coast. With Washington advancing from the north, and a French army under the French Comte de Rochambeau to the south, the British faced 16,000 troops, while they could muster only 7,000. Cornwallis desperately hoped to be evacuated by sea, but before the Royal Navy could arrive, the French fleet sailed into position. Cornwallis was forced to surrender his entire command, the largest British army in America. The date was October 19, 1781.

The Treaty of Paris, 1783

Sporadic fighting continued after Cornwallis surrendered in 1781. In March 1782, the British prime minister was replaced. Colonial negotiators began to assemble in Paris. Congress had given Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, and John Adams instructions not to negotiate without the aid of the French, but these three men did not follow their orders. The French were eager to see their European rivals defeated, but also had hopes of keeping the Americans weakened, which would aid the Spanish, another French ally, with its own interests in North America. America would also serve as a strong overseas market and continual ally. The American delegates secretly opened negotiations with the British, and a temporary treaty was reached in 1782, but the final treaty came a year later. The new treaty recognized the colonies as being independent from British rule and established a normalization of relations that would lead eventually to a strong relationship of trust and coexistence.

Teaching Activities

1. Direct students to examine the documents. Ask these questions: Are these documents primary or secondary sources? How do you know? How reliable is each document for historical accuracy? What biases can artists bring to their work?

2. Divide students into 8 groups, and direct each student group to use a Written Document Analysis Worksheet or a Photograph Analysis Worksheet for one of the documents. Using the jigsaw method, direct students to explain their results.

3. Distribute paper and colored pencils to students. Assign students to illustrate an event from the Revolutionary War or to illustrate what may have happened some time before or after one of the selected documents. Encourage students to create their illustrations from the perspective of a French or British artist.

4. Divide the class into two groups. Distribute documents 2 , 4 , and 8 (page 1 and the signature page) to the first group and ask them to discuss international involvement in the American Revolution. Ask them to write their responses to the following questions: How were foreign individuals involved in or inspired by the American Revolution? What motivated other countries to aid the American cause? Distribute documents 1 , 5 , and 7 to the second group. Ask them to discuss the conduct of the Revolutionary War and write responses to the following questions: Compare and contrast the American and British soldiers. How are they similar? Different? What motivated each? After each student group has had 30 minutes to complete their tasks, ask a representative from each group to report to the class.

5. Instruct students to study documents 2 and 3 and answer the following questions: What problems are shown facing the soldiers camped at Valley Forge? What other problems might they have faced that are not shown? How do you think the British army's experience in Philadelphia compared with the Americans' experience? For document 3,

ask students to compare the style of dress of the congressmen and the soldiers, and ask them to brainstorm what Washington might have been saying to the congressmen.

6. Assign students to research and write a monologue from the perspective of one of the individuals who played a significant role during the Revolutionary period. In their speeches, they should describe significant events of the period including the Stamp Act, the Declaration of Independence, Valley Forge, and the Articles of Confederation. Some possible individuals include the Marquis de Lafayette, Baron Von Steuben, Benedict Arnold, King George III, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, and John Adams.

7. Ask students to conduct independent research and then answer the following essay question: How were the lives of colonists affected by any THREE of the following events of the Revolutionary War?
The winter of 1777-78, the defection of Benedict Arnold, the Battle of Saratoga, the surrender of Cornwallis, or the 1783 Treaty of Paris.

The documents included in this project are available online through the National Archives Information Locator (NAIL) database < http://www.nara.gov/nara/nail.html> control numbers (NWDNS-111-SC-94758), (NWDNS-148-GW-189), (NWDNS-148-GW-184), (NWDNS-66-G-15B-5), (NWDNS-16-AD-8), (NWCTB-93-PI144E5-5H-VOL165ANO5), (NWDNS-148-GW-344), (NWCTB-11-ITA-PI159E9-TS(AO)104), and (NWCTB-11-ITA-PI159E9-TS(AO)104) . NAIL is a searchable database that contains information about a wide variety of NARA holdings across the country. You can use NAIL to search record descriptions by keywords or topics and retrieve digital copies of selected textual documents, photographs, maps, and sound recordings related to thousands of topics.

This article was written by David Traill, a teacher at South Fork High School in Stuart, FL.

ETHAN ALLEN AND CAPT. DE LA PLACE

Document 1 - Ethan Allen and Captain de la Place. May 1775. The capture of Fort Ticonderoga, New York. Copy of engraving after Alonzo Chappel.

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Document 2: Valley Forge--Washington & Lafayette. Winter 1777-78. Copy of engraving by H. B. Hall after Alonzo Chappel .

Document 3: General George Washington and a Committee of Congress at Valley Forge. Winter 1777-78. Copy of engraving after W. H. Powell, published 1866.

Document 4: Benjamin Franklin at the Court of France

Document 5: The Surrender of General Burgoyne at Saratoga. October 1777. Copy of painting by John Trumbull, 1820-1821.

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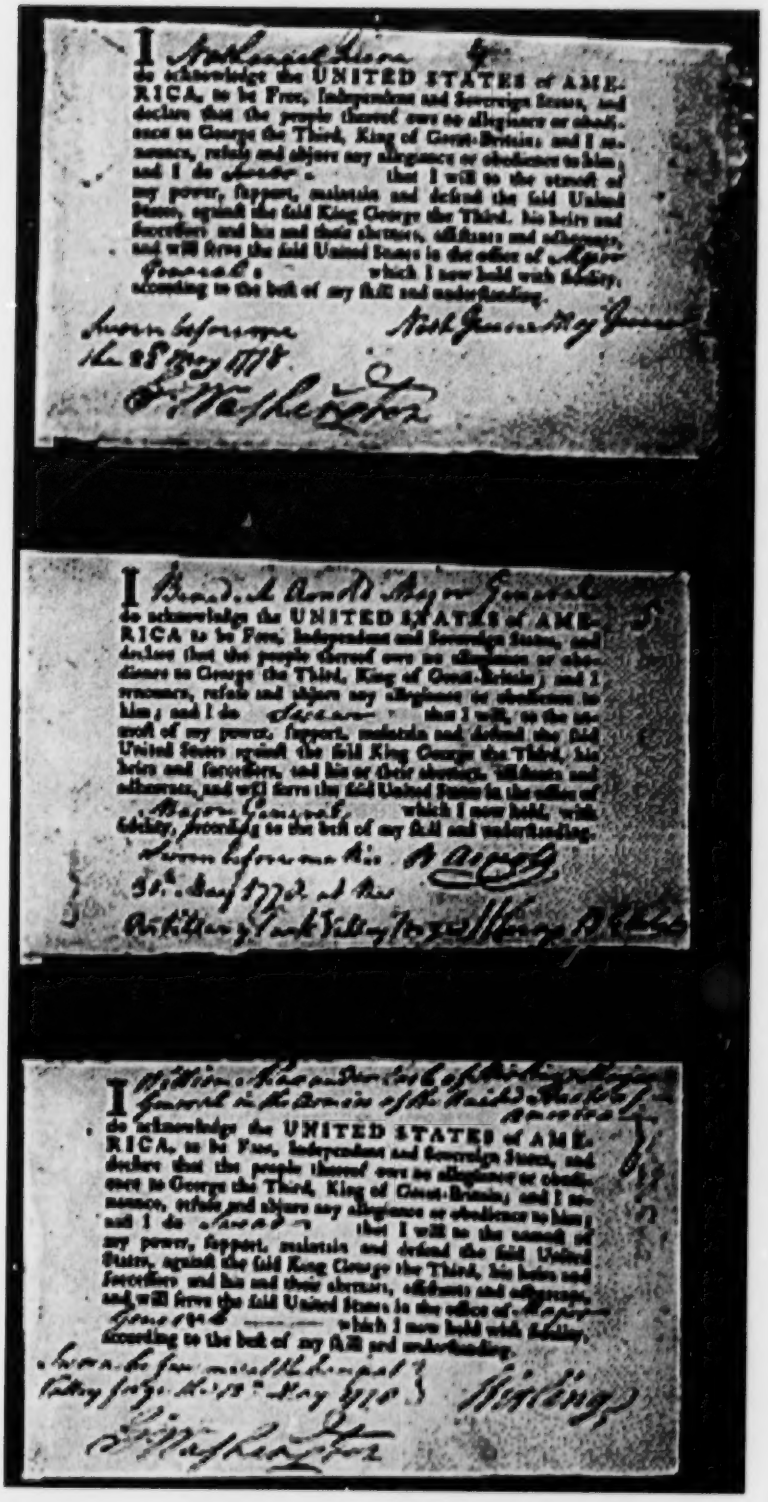

I [illegible] do acknowledge the UNITED STATES of AMERICA to be Free, Independent and Sovereign States, and declare that the people thereof owe no allegiance or obedience to George the Third, King of Great-Britain; and I renounce, refuse and abjure any allegiance or obedience to him; and I do abjure that I will to the utmost of my power, support, maintain and defend the said United States, against the said King George the Third, his heirs and successors and his and their abettors, adherents and adherents, and will serve the said United States in the office of [illegible] which I now hold with fidelity, according to the best of my skill and understanding.

Sworn before me
the 28 May 1778

I [illegible] do acknowledge the UNITED STATES of AMERICA to be Free, Independent and Sovereign States, and declare that the people thereof owe no allegiance or obedience to George the Third, King of Great-Britain; and I renounce, refuse and abjure any allegiance or obedience to him; and I do abjure that I will, to the utmost of my power, support, maintain and defend the said United States against the said King George the Third, his heirs and successors, and his or their abettors, adherents and adherents, and will serve the said United States in the office of [illegible] which I now hold, with fidelity, according to the best of my skill and understanding.

Sworn before me

I [illegible] do acknowledge the UNITED STATES of AMERICA, to be Free, Independent and Sovereign States, and declare that the people thereof owe no allegiance or obedience to George the Third, King of Great-Britain; and I renounce, refuse and abjure any allegiance or obedience to him; and I do abjure that I will to the utmost of my power, support, maintain and defend the said United States, against the said King George the Third, his heirs and successors and his and their abettors, adherents and adherents, and will serve the said United States in the office of [illegible] which I now hold with fidelity, according to the best of my skill and understanding.

Sworn before me

Document 6: Benedict Arnold's Oath of Allegiance.

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Document 7: Surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, Virginia, October 19, 1781, by which over 7,000 British and Hessians became prisoners. Copy of lithograph by James Baillie, ca. 1845.

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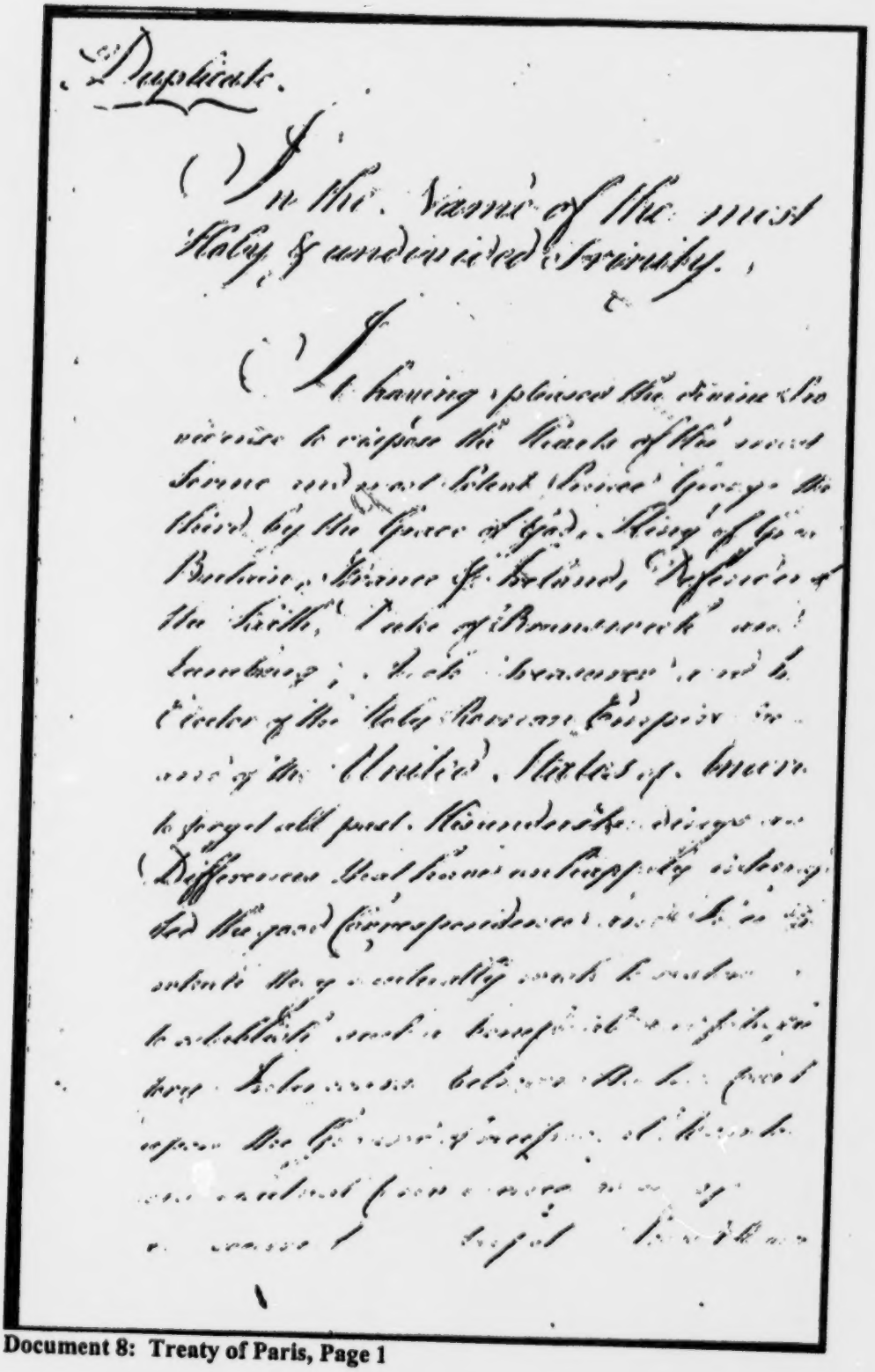

Document 8: Treaty of Paris, Page 1

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without Difficulty and without Expence
to every Country whatever.

Article 10.th

The solemn Ratifications of the
present Treaty expeditiously exchanged
between the contracting Parties in the Space of
Six Months or sooner if possible to be
computed from the Day of the Signature
of the present Treaty. In Witness
whereof We the undersigned their Ministers
Plenipotentiary have signed
with our Hands the present Definitive
Treaty, and caused the Seals of our Arms
to be affixed thereto.

Done at Paris, this third day of September
in the Year One thousand seven hundred and eighty three.

Signed John Adams. B. Franklin, John Jay

Document 8: Treaty of Paris, Signature Page

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Written Document Analysis Worksheet

1. TYPE OF DOCUMENT (Check one):

___ Newspaper	___ Map	___ Advertisement
___ Letter	___ Telegram	___ Congressional record
___ Patent	___ Press release	___ Census report
___ Memorandum	___ Report	___ Other

2. UNIQUE PHYSICAL QUALITIES OF THE DOCUMENT (Check one or more):

___ Interesting letterhead	___ Notations
___ Handwritten	___ "RECEIVED" stamp
___ Typed	___ Other
___ Seals	

3. DATE(S) OF DOCUMENT: _____

4. AUTHOR (OR CREATOR) OF THE DOCUMENT: _____

POSITION (TITLE): _____

5. FOR WHAT AUDIENCE WAS THE DOCUMENT WRITTEN? _____

_____

6. DOCUMENT INFORMATION (There are many possible ways to answer A-E.)

A. List three things the author said that you think are important:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

B. Why do you think this document was written?

_____
_____

C. What evidence in the document helps you know why it was written? Quote from the document.

_____
_____

D. List two things the document tells you about life in the United States at the time it was written:

_____

_____

E. Write a question to the author that is left unanswered by the document:

_____

_____

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Photograph Analysis Worksheet

Step 1. Observation
A. Study the photograph for 2 minutes. Form an overall impression of the photograph and then examine individual items. Next, divide the photo into quadrants and study each section to see what new details become visible.

B. Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the photograph.

PEOPLE	OBJECTS	ACTIVITIES

Step 2. Inference
Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph.

_____
_____
_____

Step 3. Questions
A. What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?

_____
_____

B. Where could you find answers to them?

_____
_____

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